



Department of Justice

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DEFOREST MAN SENTENCED TO ONE YEAR AND ONE DAY FOR INTERSTATE THREATS

MADISON, WIS. – Timothy M. O'Shea, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Michael A. Yaker, 53, DeForest, Wisconsin, was sentenced today by Chief U.S. District Judge James D. Peterson to one year and one day in federal prison for transmitting in interstate commerce a threatening communication. Yaker's prison term will be followed by three years of supervised release.

Yaker sent threatening communications on and off to various public officials and government employees since 2010. Yaker's campaign of threats continued when he left Wisconsin in January 2022. As a result of leaving Wisconsin, Yaker's threats – telephone calls and emails – were transmitted in interstate commerce, thus triggering federal jurisdiction. Yaker was charged in federal court and pled guilty on March 29, 2023.

In imposing the sentence, Judge Peterson stated, "You have hurt people ... You injure the people you threaten." The sentencing hearing primarily focused on protecting the public by treating Yaker's mental health needs. Judge Peterson directed that Yaker participate in mental health counseling during his supervised release term. While making clear that mental health resources would be provided, Judge Peterson addressed Yaker directly: "You are not a child. The primary responsibility for managing mental health is yours." Judge Peterson warned Yaker that revocation and return to custody would be swift if Yaker failed to comply with the release conditions. "I'm responsible, I get it," Yaker replied.

The charge against Yaker was the result of an investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Dane County Sheriff's Office, the Wisconsin State Capitol Police, and the Hamilton County, Kansas Sheriff's Department. The prosecution of this case has been handled by U.S. Attorney Timothy M. O'Shea and Assistant U.S. Attorney Anita Marie Boor.

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